Presence of Foreign Mercenaries in Sri Lanka

30. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY:

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA:

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has conveyed its concern to the United States over the reported presence of American mercenaries in Sri Lanka who are helping the security forces in dealing with the Tamil militants;

(b) if so, what is US Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is a fact that mercenaries from Britain, Israel and some other African and West European countries are also helping the Sri Lankan security forces; and

(d) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Government has expressed its concern over the reported presence of U.S. personnel with the Sri Lankan armed forces.

(b) An official Spokesman of the U.S. State Department denied on January 13th that there were any US mercenaries in Sri Lanka;

(c) Government are aware of the presence of personnel from Britain, Israel and some other countries who are helping the Sri Lankan forces.

(d) Government have been following such developments in Sri Lanka closely and have conveyed their anxiety and concern at the induction of outside forces, which only complicates further the search for a solution.

Offer of Technical Expertise by United Nations Environment Programme for Ganga Action Plan

31. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been received from the United Nations Environment Programme offering technical expertise for Ganga Action Plan; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R ANSARI): (a) During informal discussion the United Nations Environment Programme had indicated that it was in a position to make available a panel of consultants for sharing information and expertise about pollution control in the context of the Ganga Action Plan. It was indicated to the United Nations Environment Programme that this could be considered at a later stage when the execution of Ganga Action Plan has made some progress and the relevant issues to be addressed identified. However, no specific offer of assistance for any project has been received.

(b) Does not arise.

Africa Fund

32. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the detailed aims and objectives of the Africa Fund;

(b) what are the names of the countries which have contributed to the Africa Fund so far and the amounts contributed by each of them; and

(c) whether the appeal for contributing towards the Fund has also been made to the countries outside the Non-aligned Movement and if so, what is the response of those countries?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI) (a) The objectives of the Africa Fund are:

(i) to strengthen the economic and financially capability of the Frontline

States to fight the Apartheid regime of Pretoria and to support the liberation movements in South Africa and Namibia in their unrelenting struggle against racist and colonialist oppression;

(ii) to assist the Frontline States to enforce sanctions against South Africa and to cope with any retaliatory economic action by the racist regime.

(b) India has announced a contribution of Rs. 50 crores spread over three years. Nigeria has pledged US $ 15 million over a period of three years and Peru US $ 10 million. Others have also expressed their intention to contribute.

(c) The appeal issued by the Summit calls upon all nations of the world (including those which are not members of the Non-aligned Movement) international financial and other organisations, non-governmental organisations, and individuals to contribute generously to the Fund. The Appeal and the Plan of Action for the Fund are being forwarded to the Heads of State/Government of various countries by the Prime Minister in his capacity as the Chairman of the Fund Committee. Their responses are awaited.

Shifting of UN Headquarters to New Delhi

33. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item published in the Hindustan Times of the 14th January, 1987 captioned "plea to shift UN Headquarters to New Delhi"; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction to the suggestion made by the British Leader, Mr. Michael Foot, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) We would, of course, be very glad to have the UN Headquarters in New Delhi but there is no serious proposal to this effect.

Iran-Iraq War

34. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any fresh initiatives have been taken by the Government of India to stop the long drawn-out war between Iran and Iraq;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what are the details of the initiatives taken on behalf of the NAM countries in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) Government are persisting with their efforts to bring an end to the war between Iran and Iraq.

(c) At the NAM summit held in March 1983 in New Delhi the late Prime Minister as Chairperson of the Non-aligned Movement has issued an appeal to both sides to bring about an immediate end to the conflict. When the conflict escalated in early 1985 Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had sent messages to the Presidents of Iran and Iraq on March 13, 1985 urging them to terminate hostilities. Two days later the Prime Minister issued a public appeal and sent Special Envoys to Baghdad and Tehran to communicate his message personally. Later the Minister of State for External Affairs and the Foreign Secretary visited Baghdad and Tehran to explore ways and means to end the conflict.

Prior to the Non-aligned Coordinating Bureau Meeting of NAM held in New Delhi from 16 to 19 April 1986 the Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs visited Baghdad and